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## Estero hosts Earth Day festival to help 'save the planet'

By [Elizabeth Wright](#) 

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Crushed strawberries were part of the paint mixture that 11-year-old Rachael Glore used for the piece she entered in a children's art competition Saturday — an Earth Day art competition.



Her work was posted for display on the side of a building at Koreshan State Park, along with other childrens' work that included depictions of melting ice, arctic creatures and colorful illustrations drawn

around a message such as “Keep the World Clean.”

The competition was part of a daylong Earth Day Festival in Estero, an event that the Calusa branch of the Sierra Club has put on for six years now.

From free kayak rides along the Estero River to a chance to touch a live alligator, there was plenty to do.

And with educational displays on everything from Florida panthers to hiking trails to less toxic versions of household cleaning products, Rachael's mother, Estero resident Lynn Glore, said the event fit in well with some of the environmental topics her daughter is studying right now.

Those who have studied Earth Day know that since 1970, the day that is singled out in this country as a time to focus on environmental issues is in fact April 22 — Sunday. So, yes, event organizers were one day ahead of the game.

But an early celebration wasn't a big deal for Naples resident Nicole Buonocore. In fact, some of the festival's pleasures were of the sort she wouldn't mind experiencing more often.

“It's nice to be around people who share a consciousness about the earth,” she said.

Along with the chance to know she was among like-minded company, it was a chance for Buonocore to pick up some information on biofuel-powered vehicles as well as a package of fair trade coffee.

This was the second year that North Fort Myers resident Gari Lewis, 55, had taken part in the festival. After pleasantly stumbling into a late-afternoon drumming circle at the same event last year, she decided to come back and help out.



Photo by David Albers /  
Daily News

Bonita Springs resident  
Amy Pate celebrates her  
Earth Day 2007 amidst a  
drum circle closing out the  
Koreshan State Park's 2007  
celebration on Saturday in  
Estero.

“I thought the whole event was so cool,” she said.

As a volunteer, one of her contributions was to design a commemorative shirt for the event — a T-shirt with tie-dye sleeves, adding a bit of what she described as a touch of the 1970s to the festival's

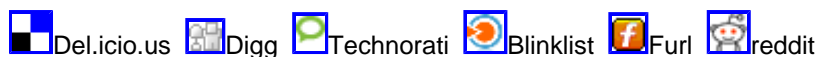
atmosphere.

From the flowing skirts and bamboo shirts for sale elsewhere to the folk-inspired guitar performances at the center of the park — that atmosphere was all part of the fun, she said.

But the scene itself wasn't the entire point of the event for Lewis.

"It's a day to just celebrate the earth. It's a day to think about things and be educated," Lewis said, then pointed to the tiny black and pink button that came pinned to the Sierra Club literature volunteers handed visitors as they entered the park.

"Just like the button says: 'I'm here to save the planet.'"



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